

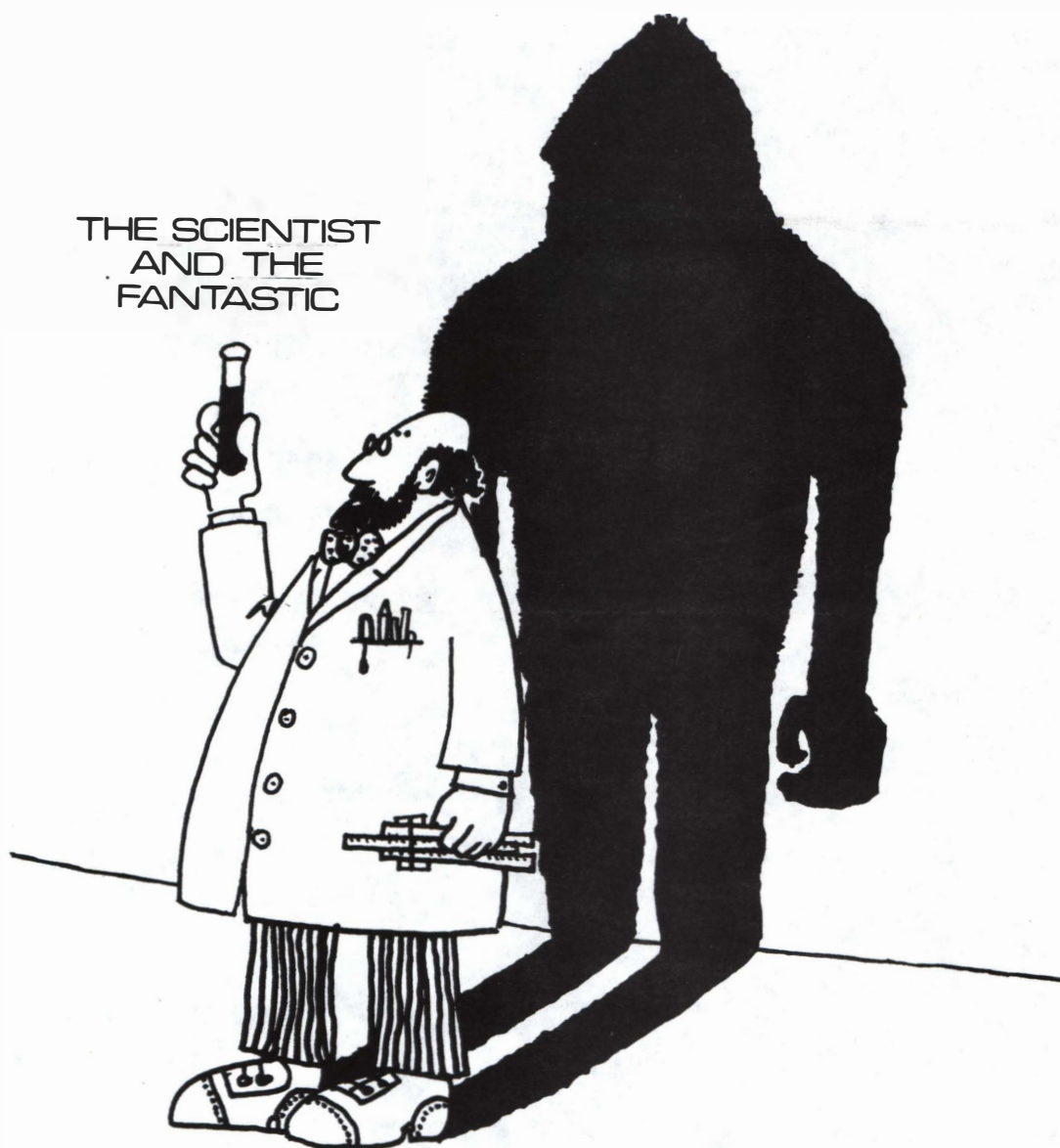
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THE SCIENTIST
AND THE
FANTASTIC



EDITORIAL

Respectability

"...If I can succeed in making the study of UFOs scientifically respectable and do something constructive in it, then I think that would be a real contribution," Dr J Allen Hynek is quoted as saying recently. (1)

It seems this much longed-for respectability is already well on the way. FSR editor Charles Bowen, speaking at the recent BUFORA Northern Conference, pointed to the increasing interest in the study of UFO reports among the scientific community.

Hynek's recent work, "The UFO Experience, seems to have done much to encourage this interest. Although much of the material in this book is already familiar to UFO enthusiasts, it appears to have aroused considerable interest among scientists who have previously refused to take ufology seriously. His criticism of the Condon Report has encouraged people to take another look at it and note its inadequacies and inconsistencies. Hynek has quoted one scientist as saying: "When you read the Condon Report you realise there really is a problem." (1)

If this awakening of interest among the scientific community is sustained it may eventually lead to the study of UFO reports becoming a source of enlightenment, rather than amusement.

THE SCIENTIST AND THE FANTASTIC

Two anomalous phenomena and their challenge to science

by Peter Rogerson

Recently there have been published two books in which scientists discuss "fantastic" events which are generally relegated to the province of "silly season" stories. These are J Allen Hynek's "The UFO Experience" (1) and John Napier's "Bigfoot". (2) Both these authors are concerned with the scientific reaction to anomalous events, a reaction which is often misunderstood.

Both UFOs and ABSMs have many features in common; they are elusive; there exists no hard evidence (in the form of parts, corpses, etc.) of their existence; they are primarily known through eye-witness accounts; their removal to the realm of pure folklore is prevented, in the major part, by the existence of ground traces (the burnt circles said to be generated by UFOs, the footprints allegedly generated by ABSMs); ambiguous photographs are produced, superficially convincing, but often containing curious contradictions.

Not surprisingly, the scientific community has refused to take the phenomena seriously. As Napier comments about "Bigfoot":

"If we confine ourselves rigidly to what most scientists would regard as hard evidence, then the answer is loud and clear: Bigfoot does not exist. There is no scrap of hard evidence that such creatures are roaming the snows of the Himalayas or the woods of the coastal ranges of the American North West today....There are no skulls.... captive animals....photographs or cine-films of unquestionable probity. What possible justification is there for intelligent people to countenance such a wraith?"

One need hardly remark that these arguments apply with even

greater force to UFOs.

But two highly intelligent men have seen fit to investigate such wraiths. Hynek is an astronomer of international repute, Napier a first class anthropologist and anatomist. Both see the weight of eye-witness testimony as the evidence from which a case can be made out for such study. Individual eye-witness reports are valueless, hence the dangers of trying to build up "the perfect UFO report"; the sceptic can say "lies" and leave it at that. What is impressive is the existence of a large number of reports, all essentially similar, with a consensus description from a random census of the percipients. Both authors examine this experience in depth.

Few readers of MUFOB will need to be told what the UFO experience is, but Hynek gives far more direct eye-witness testimony than is usual in such works. Hynek tends to approach the subject "internally" by means of eye-witness description, thus complementing Vallee who in "Anatomy of a Phenomenon" and "Challenge to Science" approached the problem by means of statistical studies of classes of reports. All of us involved in ufology will gain some further insight into the subject by studying "The UFO Experience", and will perhaps know more of the elements to look for when investigating reports. The UFO experience is puzzling and distressing to the percipients; descriptions tend to be vague, the phenomena being barely describable in current vocabularies.

Hynek recognises six categories of UFO experience, nocturnal lights, daylight discs, radar-visual, close encounters, close encounters with various physical effects, close encounters with occupants. Perhaps because of its rarity in America he appears to have overlooked a seventh category, the giant cloud cigar. Examples of eye-witness testimony are given to illustrate these categories, wherever practicable from Hynek's own files.

There has been a certain amount of criticism to the effect that the work lacks sophisticated scientific studies; however Hynek is writing primarily for the scientist with little previous knowledge of the subject, rather than the experienced UFO researcher.

The subject matter of Napier's book may be new to some (but not many) ufologists. "Bigfoot" is the generic name given to the various "hairy giants" reported mainly in the Himalayas and the wooded areas of western North America. Napier excludes certain other "semi-humans", such as the "Almas" and the "Orang Pendek", as there is no concrete evidence that these are anything but culturally primitive human tribes. Napier concludes that the evidence for the Himalayan "Yeti" is almost negligible. The Sherpas' tales are difficult to separate from the general body of folklore, and reports by European travellers are singularly ambiguous. Only the Shipton footprint photographs remain puzzling. The same cannot be said for the Sasquatch of western North America. Here there are plenty of eye-witness reports, and in addition two kinds of footprints have been found.

It is with these two varieties of footprints that troubles start, for it is inconceivable that two separate genera of ABSMs could inhabit the same area, which is what these footprints mean if taken at their face value. Yet both show evidence of authenticity. If they are faked, it would require a "Mafia" with members in dozens of small communities. But this is only the beginning, for in numerous small but important details the stories are contradictory; they just don't add up to a real large creature. For one thing the habitat seems inadequate to support a population of large, omnivorous creatures during the winter months. It is on the description of the creatures' diet that the famous Albert Ostman kidnapping story falls down.

Some other famous pieces of evidence are easily disposed of.

(continued on page 63)

INTERNATIONAL CATALOGUE OF TYPE I UFO REPORTS

compiled by Peter Rogerson

PART 2 — 1900-1929

- 51 Summer 1900 dusk CADDWST (WALES)
A twelve-year-old girl was walking home to her farm through some meadows, when a huge ovoid object rose from behind some trees and crossed the meadow at very low altitude, rising to 8m. No markings were visible on the object and no sound, except air displacement, was heard.
(Lor. IV 14)
- 52 1901 night NEW HAVEN (MISSOURI)
An elderly man, his wife and hired hand observed in some woodland a dome-shaped object "like a turtle" with three lights "like large eyes that shone like lanterns". The object was the size of a haystack, and made a buzzing sound.
(Skylook 52)
- 53 May 1901 1600 EDENDERRY (IRELAND)
A group of children walking on Glenmillan Hill saw a group of tall figures by a gate. They stood in a circle, wore black draperies, had black capes on their heads, and were carrying a black draped box on which was something like bagpipes.
(Middle Kingdom 39)
- 54 23 October 1902 0305 GULF OF GUINEA
Three persons aboard the "Fort Salisbury", including the Second Officer, A H Raymer, saw a huge dark object bearing lights in the sea ahead. It was observed sinking slowly. Estimated length 200m.
(M32; Fort 642; Anatomy 20; Heuvelmans, "In the Wake of the Sea Serpents")
- 55 June 1904 2200 ROLLING PRAIRIE (INDIANA)
Tom Darby with his mother and brother saw two luminous spherical objects "the size of cart wheels", colour described variously as blue-white, or orange, about 400m. away. The objects hovered at 2-3m. above the ground, flew towards a barn, came closer to each other, and were hidden from view behind a hill. Observed from a point situated 3 km north of Rolling Prairie.
(M33; Hartle 164; Mysteries of the Skies 91)
- 56 September 1904 EVERTON, LIVERPOOL (ENGLAND)
A popular scare was generated by rumours that a mysterious figure had been seen making prodigious leaps in William Henry Street.
(News of the World, 25 September 1904; Sandell)
- 57 22 December 1904 1718 EGRYN (WALES)
Three persons observed a large light at low altitude on the slopes of Capel Egryn. In the centre was a dark shape. The object emitted smaller lights. It eventually disappeared.
(FSR XIX, 100)
- 58 22 February 1905 night BARMOUTH (WALES)
Two persons at different standpoints, after a revival meeting at a village near Barmouth, observed a "gigantic human figure" rising over a hedgerow. Then a ball of fire appeared above, and a long ray of light pierced the figure, which vanished. One witness was a prominent farmer.
(FSR 17:4)
- 59 22 March 1905 (approx. date) night LLANDEDR (WALES)
As the revivalist Mrs Jones drove home a ball of light appeared in front of her car. At the turning to Egryn the light turned with the car, splitting into three parts then reuniting.
(Barnmouth Advertiser, 23 March 1905; Sandell)

60 25 March 1905 2115 LLANFAIR (WALES)

A number of huge balls of fire were seen to ascend from the ground by a couple at a revival meeting. The lights were of a deep red colour, and one appeared to split up. This continued for over two hours.

(PSPR XIX, 149)

61 23 July 1905 0030 YNYSYDWL (WALES)

Participants in a revival meeting observed a glowing circular object rise up from a mountainside, run parallel to the slope for approx. 30m., then ascend increasing in brilliance and trailing stars.

(PSPR XIX, 153)

62 1906 pre-dusk WOODVILLE (ENGLAND)

While walking between Great Narry Pit and Woodville, Mr G Fowler and two companions observed two figures on a nearby path. Fowler halted and approached the figures. As he did so they rose up and disappeared over some trees, to the terror of the witnesses.

(Parasite 2)

63 30 October 1906 1630 960 KM. NORTH EAST OF CAPE RACE
(ATLANTIC OCEAN)

Several crew members of the steamer "St Andrew", including Chief Officer V E Spencer, saw three objects fall into the sea about 3 km distant. Then a "huge meteor", disc shaped, metallic, diameter 5m., fell into the sea approximately 2.5 km away, with a rocking motion, and leaving a red streak. On impact a great column of steam and water was thrown up.

(New York Times, 5 November 1906; Fate (US), March 1965; Sanderson II, 27)

64 November 1906 evening ANADARKO (OKLAHOMA)

Several men, including Roy Russell, observed a luminous "stovepipe" shaped object, descending from 20m altitude, cross the field to within 5m. It appeared to flatten out and disappear at its closest point.

(Lorenzen IV, 16)

65 1903 COAST OF DELAWARE

The English ship "Mohican", piloted by Captain Urquhart, was going to Philadelphia when it was surrounded by a thick luminous cloud which "magnetised" everything on board. The compass was observed to swing wildly. When seamen tried to move some chains on the bridge, they found that they were glued to the metal floor. Suddenly the cloud rose and was seen above the sea for some time.

(M34; New York Times, 1903, exact date unknown)

66 Summer 1903 evening DUNCAN (BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA)

A 12-year-old girl was about to close the chicken house, when she was startled by a brilliant light in the pen. It rose at an angle to 10m, becoming dark. It had a cluster of dim red, blue and green lights. The object then changed direction, moved slowly for about 30m, then disappeared.

(CUFOR)

67 7 May 1909 2230 CLACTON-ON-SEA (ENGLAND)

A long, dark, cylindrical object, "sausage-shaped", was observed by Egerton Fee, hovering at approx. 42m altitude, 200m inland above the cliffs. It carried no lights and after a few minutes flew towards the north east. A bag, later identified as a naval practice target, was found next day. On May 16, two strange men, speaking a foreign tongue, made enquiries about the incident.

(FSR 16:6)

68 16 May 1909 (approx. date) SPALDING (ENGLAND)

An inhabitant of "The House" workhouse, Pinchbeck Road, claimed to have heard men talking in a strong guttural tone as an aerial object passed overhead. Regarded as a hoax by the papers.

(East Anglian Daily Times, 13 May 1909; Grove)

- 69 16 May 1909 0130 LOWESTOFT (ENGLAND)
Mrs Wigg was awakened by a noise similar to that of a motor car. Through her window she saw a long, dark "bottle shaped" object pass south-west fairly quickly, at low altitude. She saw what appeared to be a man steering at the front of the machine. Several others heard engine sounds and saw flashes of light.
(FSR 17:1)
- 70 18 May 1909 2300 CAERPHILLY MOUNTAIN (WALES)
"Punch and Judy" operator C Lethbridge was driving home from Senghenydd when, round a bend, he saw on the right a large tubular object, next to which stood "two smart young men...officers" wearing heavy fur coats and fur caps. He came within approx. 20m of them before the sound of his spring cart alerted them. The men spoke amongst themselves in a foreign tongue, appeared to pick something up, and re-entered the machine, which took off with a zig-zagging movement, accompanied by a loud engine noise. As it cleared a telegraph pole two lights shone out. The grass was found depressed and a variety of debris was discovered at the spot, including a pin and chain, with a label in French, and some typewritten instructions in English.
(M36; London Daily Mail, 20 May 1909; Anatomy 21; FSR 17:1; Humanoids 6; FSR 6:2)
- 71 19 May 1909 0300 MAINDEE (WALES)
Mr Beighton's little girl pointed out an object resembling a "big fowl". It "flapped" at times, came from the Bristol Channel, and hovered from time to time. Two others saw it; one through a telescope saw it was a craft 12m long, carrying three men.
(FSR 17:1)
- 72 22 May 1909 2230 MAESTEG (WALES)
Lights were seen over Commercial Street. One man, with a telescope, reported an aerial craft, with occupants.
(FSR 17:1)
- 73 16 June 1909 0410 DONGHOI, ANNAM (VIETNAM)
An elongated object, following a west to east trajectory, flew over the town. It gave off a strong light and was seen by two fishermen to plunge into the sea 6 km from the coast, after a steady flight of about 9 min.
(M37; Anatomy 21)
- 74 August 1909 SOUNDS (NEW ZEALAND)
A Sounds man out fishing observed an aerial object moving at low altitude. When it was over his launch the occupants threw out debris which "fizzled" when it hit the water.
Nelson Evening Mail, 6 December 1952; FS/CSI 4:4)
- 75 August 1909 KAIKORA, NEAR WAIKAWA (NEW ZEALAND)
A farmer observed a grey, torpedo-shaped machine overhead. In it were three men, one of whom shouted at the witness in a foreign language. The craft appeared to be under perfect control and carried two white lights.
(Nelson Evening Mail, 6 December 1952; FS/CSI 4:4)
- 76 24 December 1909 night QUINSIGAMOND (MASSACHUSETTS)
At the time a mysterious aerial object was being reported over New England, Ernest Anderson was walking in the woods near Malvern Road, when he encountered a figure about 2m tall. "I could see its white gown and, shining through it, the thin bones of a human skeleton". The apparition had been seen a few days earlier by Emmanuel Johnson.
(FSO 15; Worcester Daily Telegraph, 25 December 1909)
- 77 January 1910 2300 INVERCARGILL (NEW ZEALAND)
Several witnesses--among them the vicar, the Mayor and a policeman--saw a cigar-shaped object hovering at 30m altitude. A man appeared at a lateral door and was heard shouting some words in an unknown language. The opening closed and the object accelerated and was lost to sight.
(M38; Stuart 24)

- 73 early July 1910 NORMANDY (FRANCE)
The crew of the French fishing smack "Jeune Frederic" observed a large black "bird-like" object in the sky. Suddenly it plunged into the sea, bounded back and fell again, leaving no traces. No aircraft were reported missing.
(Fort 639)
- 79 30 August 1910 2040 MANHATTAN (NEW YORK)
A huge dark object, resembling a biplane, manoeuvred low, accompanied by a noise like an engine. At one point it descended to treetop height.
(Keel II, 120)
- 80 22 September 1910 evening DUNKIRK WATERWORKS (NEW YORK)
Engineer Dennis Ready reported to the police a cigar shaped object which descended and appeared to enter the water. A search by a fishing tug was fruitless.
(FSR 16:3)
- 81 1912 afternoon COLOGNE (GERMANY)
Robert Dickoff (3) was in his room when he suddenly noticed two beings 1m tall, with human features, sitting on his bed. They "faded out" as he looked.
(UFOARB 1:5)
- 82 14 October 1912 1900 SHEERNESS (ENGLAND)
An aerial object was heard at low altitude, and a light was seen in the sky. Flares were lit but the machine did not land.
(Times, 13 November 1912; Hansard, 13 November 1912--Oral Answers, November 21--Written Answers, November 27--Oral Answers; Grove)
- 83 3 December 1912 afternoon PORTSMOUTH (ENGLAND)
An aerial object carrying the White Ensign came from the north, remained stationary for 15 min. then returned. A crew of four was visible on board.
(Times, 4 December 1912; Grove)
- 84 1913 night VALENSOLE (FRANCE)
Near L'Olivail field a peasant couple saw a luminous, red, egg shaped object descend, rest on the ground for 15 min., then ascend and vanish.
(FSR 14:1)
- 85 21 February 1913 2200 SELBY (ENGLAND)
A party of businessmen at Church Fenton Station saw an aerial machine which projected a strong searchlight onto the railway lines. At one time the object almost hovered on the rooftops, then it rose to a great height, and after 20 min. left in a northerly direction at high speed. The craft had red starboard and green port lights.
(The Standard, 24 February 1913; Grove)
- 86 23 February 1913 NORTH SEA
An aerial craft with a "very powerful and dazzling" light approached the Hull trawler "Othello" so low that the skipper feared for the safety of his mast. The ship's whistle was blown and the airship swerved to the west, then circled the trawler twice, keeping the beam projected on it. The object carried two other brilliant lights, 1.5 to 2m apart, aft of the "searchlight". The object then rose and proceeded westerly. The skipper signalled on his siren and the airship flashed its lights in reply.
(Hull Daily Mail, 4 March 1913; Grove)
- 87 22 March 1913 (approx. date) INVERARY (SCOTLAND)
As Lord Archibald Campbell lay dying, a number of people saw a boat-like object, described as a "funny airship", cross Loch Fyne and the town at very low altitude. It was regarded as the traditional omen of the death of a Lord Campbell.
(Halifax Ghost Book, 11)

38 June 1914

0400

HAMBURG (GERMANY)

Gustav Herwagen opened the door of his house and saw in a field a shining cigar-shaped object with illuminated windows. Near it were four or five dwarfs, 1.2m tall, clad in light clothing. He approached them, but they went aboard the object as soon as they appeared to be aware of his presence. A door closed and the craft took off silently, climbing vertically.

(M39; Nachrichten, April 1962)

89 August 1914

GEORGIAN BAY (CANADA)

William J Kiehl and seven other persons saw a spherical craft on the surface of the water. On its deck were two small men wearing green-purple clothes. They seemed to be busy with a hose, plunging it into the water. On the opposite side were three men dressed in light brown, wearing square masks down to their shoulders. Seeing the witnesses, all except one of the dwarfs entered the craft. This one wore shoes with a curved, pointed tip, and remained outside while the craft rose 3m above the water and shot upward, leaving a short trail.

(M40; El Paso Times, 1 March 1967; Lorenzen II, 20)

90 23 August 1914

sunrise

SAVERNAKE, NEW SOUTH WALES (AUSTRALIA)

Howard Sloan (12) and his 11-year-old brother heard an engine sound moving below the tree line to the north. Through a gap in the trees a biplane was visible at 30m altitude. It did not reflect the sunlight. This occurred 290 km from the nearest air base, and the Australian Flying Corps had only five planes.

(FSR 17:1)

91 September 1914

evening

GREYTOWN (SOUTH AFRICA)

A farmer encountered a machine resembling a biplane while walking home across the veldt. Nearby were two pilots pailing water from a stream. There were few, if any, viable planes in the country at the time.

(FSR 8:3; Keel II, 121)

92 21 August 1915

GALLIPOLI (TURKEY)

During severe fighting in the Dardanelles a peculiar cloud engulfed a British regiment, which was never seen again. This was observed by 22 men of the First Field Company, NZ Army Corps, and stated in an affidavit.

(M41; Spaceview 45; LDIN 32; Magonia)

93 1916 (approx. date) 1155

ALDEBURGH (ENGLAND)

Mrs Whiteland saw a strange object come from the marshes at an altitude of 10m. It turned, went over the railway yard and disappeared behind some houses. It was a platform, diameter 4m, 30 cm thick, on which 3-12 men were standing, gripping a metallic handrail. The men wore blue suits and blue caps. The object was totally silent. No machinery was visible; the centre of the contraption was hollow.

(FSR 15:1)

94 May 1916

1030

RENSELAER (CALIFORNIA)

(or following month)

About 13 km south of Renselaer, a huge, metallic, elongated oval machine, dull grey in colour, hovered just above the ground, at the foot of a hill 1.6 km from the witness. It was 12m long, 3m thick, and the surface did not reflect the brilliant sunlight. After 10 seconds the object accelerated away at "shocking" speed and a 25 degree angle, disappearing in two or three seconds.

(Mysteries of the Skies 104)

95 October 1917

1230

YOUNGSTOWN (PENNSYLVANIA)

John Boback (17) was walking along the railroad tracks between Youngstown and Mt. Braddock when he saw a saucer shaped object with a platform and a row of lights, sitting in a field 30m to his left. He watched the object for 1-2 min. until it took off with a high pitched "swishing" sound, rising gradually like a slow plane. Its size was that of an average car. The top of the object was a dome with elongated windows through which figures could be seen.

(M42; Hartle 157; M of S 104)

- 96 November 1918 night SUNBURY ON THAMES (ENGLAND)
Col. Leland and his chauffeur Webber were driving from Sunbury on Thames to Kempton Park when they saw a dark object "like a horse-drawn hearse with no horses visible" with a light on the back. The object turned a corner and disappeared.
(Bennet, 367)
- 97 1921 MARSEILLES (FRANCE)
An undocumented report of an abduction by two beings in diving suits.
(M43; Quincy; FSR 10:1)
- 98 22 February 1922 0500 HUBBELL (NEBRASKA)
William C Lamb was following strange tracks when he heard a high-pitched sound and saw a circular object intercepting starlight. It became brilliantly lighted and landed in a hollow. Soon afterwards, a creature over 2.4m tall was seen flying from the direction where the object had landed. It left tracks in the snow, which Lamb followed without results.
(M44; Anatomy 22)
- 99 April 1922 early morning COUNTY DONEGAL (IRELAND)
During the Irish Civil War, Lawrence Bradley came to a cave, the foliage at the entrance of which was burnt. Soldiers sheltering inside said they had been awakened in the early morning by a "whirring" sound, and fired at an object. The object fired jets of fire at the cave. As the soldiers emerged the object, circular and metallic, was beginning to ascend.
(FS Menace, 39; Watford and South Herts Post, 30 April 1964; D/N, v:3)
- 100 9 September 1922 BARMOUTH (WALES)
John Morris and William James saw an object fall into the ocean so slowly that it was thought to be a plane. A boat was sent out, but nothing was found.
(M45; Fort, 639)
- 101 1925 (approx. date) LA MANCHA (SPAIN)
A man suddenly met a strange being, 1.2m tall, wearing a greenish uniform. The entity had rigid limbs, held a disc in its hands, and was propelled by another disc on which it was standing. The witness observed it from a distance of 2m. No word was exchanged.
(D1; Ribera, first hand)
- 102 18 October 1927 BAKERFIELD (CALIFORNIA)
While driving through the outskirts of Bakerfield, Richard Sweed encountered a metallic blue-grey object, diameter 20m, taking off from the ground. The object had openings which had protruding metallic or ceramic objects over them, resembling lenses. The machine gave off a high pitched hum as it moved, with a steady acceleration at 45 degrees. The sand where the object had stood was found to be fused.
(Lor IV, 13)
- 103 Summer 1923 (approx. date) ANSTEY LANE, LEICESTER (ENGLAND)
A girl of 6 (now Mrs Pauline Berger) was walking with her father, when they rested in a field in Anstey Lane. She was reading when her attention was caught by a black "scarecrow" figure with a large head and "dangling" arms, apparently lacking a face. When she looked again, she saw a spherical object on legs by the figure. Frightened, she roused her father, but the figure and sphere had vanished.
(FSR 15:1)
- 104 10 November 1923 2230 MILTON (NORTH DAKOTA)
A silver object, resembling an inverted soup bowl, came out of the north, creating panic among the herd belonging to Norman H Sabie and his brother, 6.5 km north of Milton. The object was 7m in diameter, and had a hump in the centre from which four equally spaced beams of light were projected. These did not illuminate the ground though the object was only at 6m altitude. The object made a roaring sound as it sped past the witnesses at a distance of 40m, disappearing in the south in 12-15 seconds.
(Mysteries of the Skies, 107)

105 1929

HERTFORD (ENGLAND)

The two Priest children (5 and 8) were in their garden when they heard an engine noise and saw, coming over the fence from the orchard, a tiny biplane, which landed briefly, almost striking the dustbin. In the cabin was a tiny, perfectly proportioned pilot, who waved at the children. He wore a leather flying helmet. After a few seconds the plane, which had a wingspan of 30 cm, took off.

(FSR 16:4)

106 12 June 1929 2300

FERMEUSE (CANADA)

Levis Brosseau (20) was returning home when he saw a dark object with a yellow light and his horse became very nervous. Within 6m of the object, which was 50m from the witness, four or five dwarfish figures were running back and forth. He heard their childlike voices, then saw the dark object take off with a machine-like sound, a rush of air and a trembling of the ground. The object was 15m in diameter, 5m high, had windows "lit a little like the moon," and black objects on the circumference, in apart from each other.

(M46; GEPA, December 1968; SSS 54)

107 July 1929

ROBSART (CANADA)

Five persons, among them Einar Rostivold, saw a huge ball of light giving off fiery colours, 25 km from Robsart. It landed slowly and vanished gradually after illuminating the whole countryside for 30 min.

(M47; Fate (US), January 1953)

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Notes

- 52 This "monster" story should be treated with some reserve.
- 53 This case is only marginally connected with the subject, but note the similarity to the 22 February 1969 Awanui (NZ) report.
- 54 Heuvelmans considered this report to be a hoax.
- 56 Searches of local papers, by John Rimmer, were fruitless. This report is possibly a journalistic hoax. Several later references talk of eye-witnesses, though.
- 57-61 Study of this important wave is still in progress, and the reports here are very abbreviated. All the material not from the SPR in this group is from the researches of Roger Sandell.
- 62 No documentation was provided for this report, and its authenticity is unknown.
- 67-70, 32-36 These reports are from the research (published and unpublished) of Carl Grove, a pioneer of historical research in the subject in this country.
- 78 It is possible that this object may have been a bird, but the size makes this doubtful.
- 81 In view of the alleged witness's involvement with the more dubious aspects of ufology, this report should, perhaps, be treated with some reserve.
- 82 This report can only be marginally classed as Type 1, as opposed to Type 4.
- 92 This report should be treated with extreme suspicion. Either a deliberate hoax, or the connection of two disparate events by a trick of memory, is highly probable.
- 93 This report should be regarded with extreme suspicion. Lamb claimed an earlier contact with "benevolent space people" and was active in the fringes of ufology, at one point selling photographs of the "Throne of God" and "Satan transforming into a spaceship". Another version of this story has a second object appearing and causing the monster to flee by quoting Biblical texts.
- 99 This story also appears dubious.

Magonia report excluded. M35 This refers to the Tunguska meteorite, which there is no real reason for classifying as UFO related phenomena.

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The Scientist and the Fantastic (continued from page 60)

The notorious Minnesota "Iceman" was a crude fake. The much publicised Patterson cine film is internally inconsistent; the figure appears to be a female, but the gait is masculine. It resembles very much an actor in a monkey skin overacting for emphasis. Was Patterson the hoaxer or the hoaxed? It is difficult to credit either.

The ABSM exists as a mythological figure in both Asian and Amerindian communities. It fulfils a role similar to the "little people" of European legend. Napier argues that myths have an important role to play in the evolution of human communities, and even argues the existence of a genetic element in myths. The Bigfoot is a scapegoat onto which our less pleasant qualities can be projected, a bugbear used to enforce social discipline, and a focus for community tradition. Because they fulfil basic social needs monster myths are to be found in all cultures. Napier suggests that both the Yeti and the Sasquatch are cultural traditions of the orang-utan, which was once widespread in Central Asia. These traditions could have been brought to America by the Amerindian migrants. Napier's dilemma, which he cannot resolve, is that this hypothesis cannot explain the footprints. His hypotheses, however, are of great interest to ufologists, for if tradition can be so modified, can it provide the basis for the descriptions of UFO occupants. After reading

"Bigfoot" one is tempted to agree with Keel, that monsters can hardly have a "real" existence at all.

Both Napier and Hynek critically examine the role of the professional scientists in the investigation of anomalous phenomena.

In this context, Hynek provides some amusing anecdotes about the US Air Force Project Blue Book, and the Condon investigations. The last head of the former was Hector Quintanilla, an inordinately pompous man, a fact borne out by his interrogation of UFO witness Dale Spaur:

SPAUR: Well, wait a minute, let me speak.

QUINTANILLA: You used the wrong word.

S: OK, well...

Q: I'm an officer in the United States Air Force...

S: Right, you definitely are.

Q: And I don't call anyone nuts.

.....

Q: And treat me with the same respect that I treat you.

Other Blue Book heads included: "...Captain Harding (who had ambitions to be a stock broker)..... Captain Gregory (to whom promotion was the be all and end all of existence...."

Blue Book was far too incompetent to have covered up cases in the way UFO buffs suggest, and was permanently understaffed. Hynek castigates the Condon committee for a number of scientific sins, including poor selection of data, identification of the UFO problem with the ETH, inadequate and ill-thought out procedure, and the bias of Condon himself, which he seems to have picked up to some extent from his wife. In any case the committee was set an almost impossible task.

Napier suggests that one of the major reasons why the scientific community is reluctant to study anomalous phenomena is the desire to avoid problems which appear to be insoluble, and do not provide financial security. This is coupled with a fear of ridicule, if they fail to solve the problems. Hynek quotes the science historian Goudge, to the effect that establishments reject observations which challenge the prevailing world view. This lack of scientific interest has led to the virtual take over of the involvement in these subjects by cranks, which has only served to make the scientific community more wary than ever. However, Napier rejects the suggestion often put out by "buffs" that scientists conspire to hide evidence; scientists are too garrulous to make good conspirators.

Both authors have suggestions for the better study of anomalous phenomena. Hynek suggests a UNESCO sponsored project to co-ordinate the efforts of the various UFO groups, and the use of full time investigators. This seems to be rather wishful thinking. Few UFO groups are as competent as APRO and NICAP, and few "ufologists" are interested in research. Napier suggests that:

"It is up to the grant-giving foundations, and research councils...to devote a proportion of their budgets to students...who wish to investigate the insoluble, the outrageous and the offbeat."

Not that UFO research is necessarily "outrageous" or the problem insoluble, nevertheless the idea is worth examining. The best solution would seem to be a private international body devoted to the study of the whole range of anomalous phenomena. This would greatly increase the cross-fertilisation of ideas and information between workers in the various fields. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that some wealthy individuals, or some institution, might be prepared to finance such a project.

The publication of these two works is to be greatly welcomed. Both will serve to stimulate scientific interest in the two phenomena,

and should go a long way towards clarifying a number of problems in these areas.

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2. NAPIER, John. Bigfoot; the Yeti and Sasquatch in myth and reality. 240 pp. ISBN 0224 007963. £2.95.

LOCAL UFO REPORTS

Hoylake, Wirral, Cheshire

May 1973

The following report appeared in the Birkenhead News on June 1, 1973:

A Birkenhead man, hairdresser Douglas Fletcher, of Pemberton Road, Arrowe Park, claims a series of UFO sightings. With his girl friend Dianna Smethurst, formerly of York Avenue, West Kirby, and now living in Wallasey, Douglas spotted strange lights just above the sea's surface, at around midnight, on at least three separate occasions late last month.

On the first occasion, the two had parked along Hoylake Promenade one evening when lights above the water suddenly appeared. "There was a red light at the rear, with a white light in front," said Douglas, "and they were moving along the Dee at a terrific speed, and flashing alternatively at irregular intervals."

Not surprisingly, the couple were sufficiently intrigued to return to the same spot the following evening—this time armed with binoculars and telescope. And they witnessed even stranger events than before. "I saw a huge yellow shape, the size of a bus, with a yellow light some 200 yards above it," he said. "The entire vision was moving some three miles ahead across a stretch of beach on the Dee estuary."

And on a third occasion, even more recently, both have spotted a similar set of lights, consisting of about 14 separate entities, which zig-zagged their way towards Douglas and Dianna from a distance of about two miles away.

Douglas is adamant that what he saw could not have been any sort of boat—as the tide was out at the time—and neither could it have been a hovercraft, as there were no roaring sounds. Both Douglas and Dianna say that after sighting the strange goings on, their eyes swelled and hurt.

They have contacted the police, as well as the Royal Navy and the RAF. Liverpool's Air Aviation centre has also been informed, and details have since been sent on to, and filed at, the Aeronautical Information Centre in West Drayton, London.

"There are various explanations for some UFOs," said a spokesman from the centre, "such as the weird effect of cloud reflections along coastlines, or even flares at sea." But, he stressed that all reports of UFOs are meticulously followed up, and filed for future reference.

NOTICE

Revision of Mailing List

Only about 100-120 copies of each issue of MUFOB are printed and we have now reached the stage where there are no copies to spare for potential exchanges and actively interested individuals who wish to be on our mailing list. Some of the persons and organisations at present on our list have not been heard of for some time, and may have changed addresses, or be no longer interested,

So, if an 'x' appears here — — you will receive no further issues unless we hear from you.

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